

*Aum*

**In Loving Memory of**

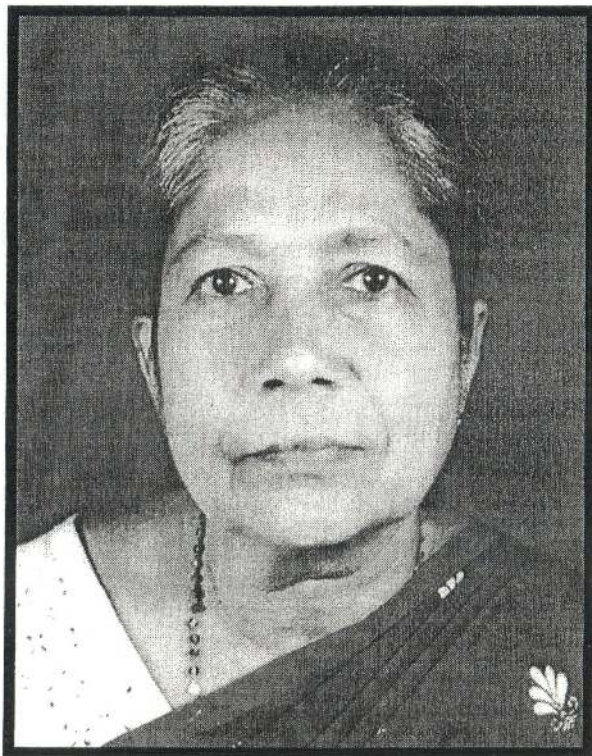
**MRS. CHANDRAVATHANA VIJIADHARMA**



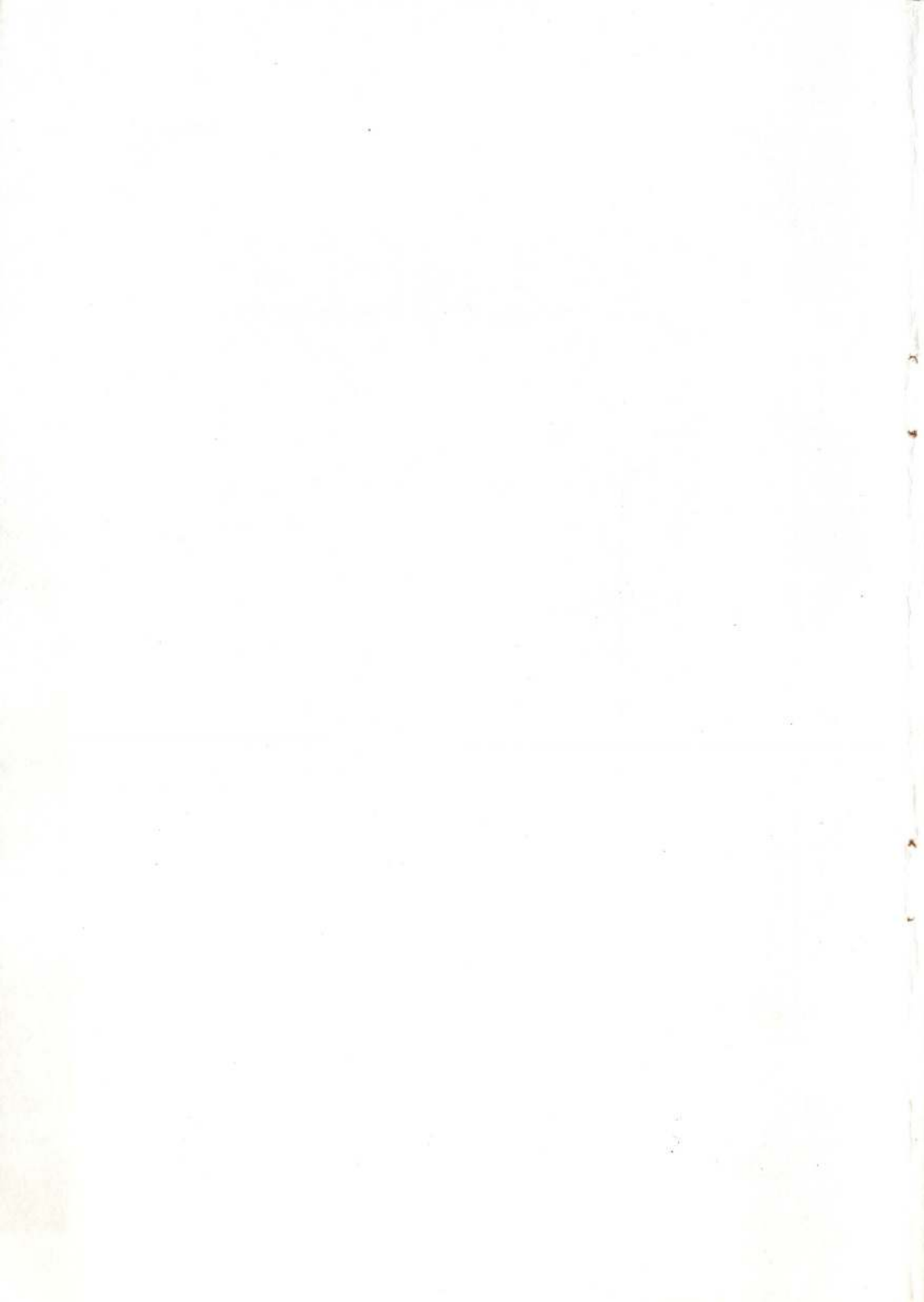
**Born : March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1936**

**Called to Rest : January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009**





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## **GANESHA STUTHI**

*- From Tirumntiram by Saint Tirumoolar -*

Ainthu karathanai aanai muhathanai  
Inthin ilampirai polum eyitranai  
Nanthi mahan thannai gnanak kolunthinai  
Punthiyil vaithaddy portruhinrene.

I enshrine in my heart and adore him  
Lord Ganesha, who has five arms, an elephant head  
With tusks like the crescent moon  
Son of Lord Siva who rides the bull  
adorned by the flame of wisdom within him

## **SIVAPURANAM**

*Saint Manickavasaga Swamigal's Sacred Utterance  
At Thiruperunthurai*

### **Thiruchittrambalam**

Tollai irum piravi solum thalai neeki  
Allal Aruthu Aanatham Akkiyathey Ellaai  
Maruvaa Neri Alikkum Vaathavoor Engkon  
Thiru Vaasaham Ennum Thane

- > Namachivaya vaalha, Nathan thaal vaalha
- > \*Hail, Namasivaya! Hail, feet of the Lord!
- > Emaipoluthum en nenchil neengaathan thal vaalha
- > \*Hail, feet of Him, who not for an instant quits my heart
- > Kokali anda kurumani than thaal vaalha
- > \*Hail, feet of Guru-pearl that rules in Kokali
- > Aagamamaahi ninru annippaan thaal vaalha
- > \*Hail, feet of Him who becomes, abides, draws near, as the Agamas (Vedas)
- > Ehan aneihana eraivan adi vaalha
- > \*Hail, feet of Him the One, the Not-one and the King
- > Veham keduthu-aanda veinthan ady velha



- > \*Victory to the feet of the King, who soothes my soul 's unrest and made me His own
- > Pirappu arukum pinghahanran peikalalhal velha
- > \*Victory to the jeweled feet of pinghahan, who severs continuity of birth, > Purathaarku cheiyonran poonkalahal velha
- > \*Victory to the flower-feet of Him who is far from those without
- > Karam kuvivar ulam mahilum konekalalhal velha
- > \*Victory to the anklets of the King, rejoicing amid hose that fold adoring hands
- > Chirankuvivar Onguvikkum cheerone kalal velha
- > \*Victory to the anklets of the glorious One, who uplifts those that bow the head
- > Eesanady portri enthai adi portri
- > \*Praise to the feet of the Eesan, Praise to my Father's feet
- > Thesanady portri, Sivan sevady portri
- > \*Praise to the feet of the Teacher, Praise to Sivan's roseate feet
- > Neyathey ninra Nimalan adi portri
- > \*Praise to the feet of the Stainless, who in love stood near
- > Maya pirappu arukkum mannan adi portri
- > \*Praise to the feet of the King, who cuts off delusive birth
- > Cheeraar Perunthurai than Theven adi portri
- > \*Praise to the feet of glorious Perun-thurai's Lord
- > Araatha inpam arulum malai portri
- > \*Praise to the Mount, in grace affording pleasure that cloys not
- > Sivan avan en chinthaiyul ninra athanaal
- > \*Because He, Sivan, within my thought abides
- > Avan arulaale avan thaal vanangi
- > \*By his grace alone, bowing before His feet
- > Chinthai mahila Sivapuranam thannai
- > \*With joyous thought, Sivan's "Ways of Old" I'll tell
- > Munthai vinai muluthum oya uraippan yaan
- > \*That my former "deeds" may wholly lapse
- > Kan nuthalaan than karunai kan kaata vantheithy
- > \*I came, attained the grace the "Brow-eyed bestowed
- > Ennuthatku etta elil-aar kalal erainchi
- > \*Adored the beauteous feet by thought un-reached

- > Vin nirainthu man nirainthu mikkai vilanku oliyaa
- > \*O Thou, who fill'st the heaven, who fill'st earth, art manifested light
- > En eranthu ellai elaathaane nin perum cheer
- > \*Transcending thought, Thou boundless One, Thy glory great
- > Polla vinaiyene pualumaru onru ariyene
- > \*I, man of evil "deeds" know not the way to praise
- > Pullahi poodai puluvai maram aahi
- > \*Grass was I, shrub was I, worm, tree
- > Pal viruhamaahi, paravaiyai paambaahi
- > \*Full many a kind of beast, bird, snake
- > Kallaai manitharaai peyaa kanangalaai
- > \*Stone, man and demon, midst Thy hosts I served
- > Val asurar aahi munivaraai thevaraai
- > \*The form of mighty asuraas, ascetics, Gods, bore
- > Chellaathu ninra ith thavara sangamathul
- > \*Within these immobile and mobile forms of life
- > Ella pirappum piranthu illaithene emperumaan
- > \*In every species born, weary I've grown, great Lord
- > Meye un pon adikal kandu inru veedu uttene
- > \*Truly, seeing Thy golden feet this day, I've gained release
- > Uiya en ullathul omkaramai ninra
- > \*O Truth, as the Omkaram dwelling in my Soul
- > Meiya Vimala vidaipaha vethankal
- > \*That I may escape, O Spotless One! O master of the bull!
- > Aiya ena onki aalnthu ahanra nunniyaney
- > \*Lord of the Vedas, rising, sinking, spreading subtle One!
- > Veyai thaniyai eyamananaam Vimala
- > \*Thou art the heat, and Thou art the cold, the Master Thou, O Spotless One!
- > Poi aayina ellam poi ahala vanthu aruli
- > \*Thou cam'st in grace that all things false might flee
- > Mei gnanam aahi milirhinra mei chudarey
- > \*True Wisdom, gleaming bright in splendor true
- > Engnanam illathene inpa Perumaney
- > \*To me, void of all wisdom, blissful Lord!

- > Agnanam thannai ahalvikkum nallarivey
- > \*O Wisdom fair, causing wisdom's self to flee far off
- > Aakkam alavu iruthy illaaa anaithu ulahum
- > \*Thou knw'st no increase, measure, end, All worlds
- > Aakkuvai, kaappai alippai arul tharuvai
- > \*Thou dost create, protect, destroy, enrich with grace
- > Pokuvai ennai puhuvippai nin tholumbin
- > \*Release Thou causest me to enter 'mid Thy servant band
- > Naatathin neiriyai cheiyai naniyaane
- > \*More subtle Thou than fragrance, Thou art afar, art near
- > Maatram manam kaliya ninra maraiyaoney
- > \*Thou art the Mystic word transcending speech and thought
- > Karantha paal kannalodu nei kalanthaat pola
- > \*As when are mingled milk, sweet juice of cane and ghee
- > Chirantha adiyaar chinthanaiyul thein oori ninru
- > \*Thou dost distill, like honey, in the thought of glorious devotees
- > Pirantha piruppu arukkum engal Perumaan
- > \*And cuttest off the continuity of births - Our Mighty One
- > Nirangal ore einthu udaiyai vinnorkal eitha
- > \*Thou art of colors five while heavenly ones extolled
- > Marainthu irunthai emperuman val vinaiyene thannai
- > \*Thou didst lie hid, our mighty Lord! In the strong grasp of deeds
- > Marainthida moodiya maya irulai
- > \*I lay, hidden amid illusion's shrouding gloom
- > Aram paavam ennum arunkayittat katti
- > \*Thou bonding with rare cords of virtue and of sin
- > Puanthole porthu engum pulu alukku moodi
- > \*Didst clothe with outer skin, enveloping with worm and filth
- > Malam chorum onpathu vayil kudilai
- > \*Within my nine-gated dwelling foul bewildered
- > Malanga pulan einthum vanchanaiyai cheiya
- > \*By the five senses sore deprived
- > Vilanku manathaal Vimala unakku
- > \*That I, with mind, erewhile embruted- Pure One
- > Kalanthu anpaahi kasinthu ul uruhum
- > \*Should, become co-mingling love, in soul subduing rapture melt



- > Nalam than illaatha chiriyetku nalhi
- > \*To me, mean as I was, with nothing good, Thou didst grant grace
- > Nilam than mel vantharuli neel kalakal kaati
- > \*Thou cam'st in grace on this same earth, didst show Thy mighty feet
- > Naayit kadaiyai kidantha adiyetku
- > \*To me who lay mere slave, meaner than any dog
- > Thaayit chirantha thaya aana thathuvaney
- > \*Essential grace more precious than a mother's love
- > Maasu atra Chothy malantha malar chudarey
- > \*Spotless splendor! Brightness of full-blown flower!
- > Thesaney Thenar amuthey Sivapuraney
- > \*O Teacher! Honeyd ambrosia Lord of Siva-Town
- > Paasamaam patru aruthu paarikum aariyaney
- > \*O Venerated One, Guardian, loos'ner of Pasam's tie
- > Nesa arul purinthu nenchil vancham keda
- > \*Working in grace of love, that in my mind delusion may die out
- > Perathu ninra perum karunai peraarey
- > \*Great river of exceeding tenderness, with ceaseless flow
- > Aara amuthey alavilla perumaney
- > \*Ambrosia that satiates not! Infinite, Almighty Lord!
- > Orathaar ullathu olikkum olianey
- > \*Light unseen that lurks within the souls that sought Thee not!
- > Neerai urukki en aaruyirai ninraaney
- > \*Thou who abidest in my soul, till melting waters flow!
- > Inpamum thunpamum illaney ullaney
- > \*Thou who art without pleasure or pain, who yet has both!
- > Anparukku anpaney yavaiumai allaiyumai
- > \*Loving to loving ones! Effulgent One, who all things art
- > Chuthiyaney thun-eruley thonrayi perumaiyaney
- > \*And their negation too! Great master whom no darkness gather round
- > Aathiyaney anthem naduvahi allaney

- > \*First one, Thou'rt End and Mis'le, and yet devoid of these!
- > Eerthu ennai aartkonda enthai Perumaney
- > \*Father, Lord, who drew'st and mad'st me Thine!
- > Koortha meignanathaal kondu unarvaar tham kauthin
- > \*Eye of the minds that see by keenest glance of wisdom true
- > Nokariya nokeh nunukkariya nunnunarvey
- > \*Hard to be eyed! Subtle understanding, none can scrutinize!
- > Pokum varavum punarvumilla Punniyaney!
- > \*Holy! Who com'st not, nor go'st, nor mingling liv'st!
- > Kaakum em kaavalaney kaanpariya peroliyeh
- > \*Guardian who guardest us! Great light whom none can see!
- > Aartu inpa vellamey atha mikkai ninra
- > \*Flood of delight! Father! Light of all passing splendors!
- > Thotach chuddar oliyai chollatha nun-unarvai
- > \*That appear! Unutterably subtle intellect!
- > Maatramaam vaiyahathin veverey vantharivaam
- > \*Of all that in this world diverse pronounced as truth
- > Thetraney thetrath thelivey en chinthani ul
- > \*Is known, Thou art the knowledge sure! Full certitude!
- > Ootrana unnaar amuthey udaiaaney
- > \*Precious ambrosia, fountain welling up within! My owner Thou!
- > Vetru vikara vidakku udampin ul kidappa
- > \*I can't endure, our Sire, in this changing straightened frame to 'bide
- > Aatreney em Aiyaa Araney O enrenru
- > \*Aran, all thy saints made true invoke Thee
- > Portri puhalnthu irunthu poi kettu meiyanaar
- > \*Worshipping abide and praising Thee, from falsehood freed
- > Meetu ingu vanthu vinai piravi charamey
- > \*Hither return no more! That deeds and birth cling not
- > Kalla pulakurambai kattu alikka vallaney!
- > \*To sever bonds of this deceitful sensuous frame the might is thine
- > Nallirulil nattam payindradum nathaney
- > \*Lord who dost dance, trampling dense darkness down!
- > Thillaiul koothaney Thenpandi naataaney

- > \*Dancer in Thillai, dweller in the Southern Paandi Land!
- > Allal piravi aruppaney o enru
- > \*Thou who dost cut off evil birth!
- > Chollatku atiyana! cholli thuvadi keel
- > \*Whom words declare not: then "NEATH THY SACRED FEET"
- > Cholliya paatin porul unarnthu cholluvaar
- > \*Adoring ever, Thee – Thy name
- > Chelvar Sivapurathin ullaar Sivan adi keel
- > \*In Sivan's town who dwell – beneath the feet of Sivan
- > Pallorum etha paninthu.
- > \*Full many a one, lowly bending utter praise.

Thiruchittampalam

### REMINISCENCE OF A LOYAL OLD GIRL OF CHUNDIKULI GIRLS' COLLEGE

I feel so honoured to have been asked to write a tribute to my teacher, friend, and colleague the late Mrs. Chandra Vijadharmha. Loyalty, honesty and integrity, duty conscious, caring, kind, helpful, humble and simple are the words that come to my mind when I think of Mrs. Vijiadharmha. She was a monument of these virtues. My connection with Mrs. Vijiadharmha goes back to late 1940s. We were family friends. As my father was their family physician they visited us often. Her father Mr. Nadarajah was a good friend of my father.

Chandra akka was a well disciplined and eager senior student in school, while I was in the lower classes. She entered the University of Peradeniya In 1955, graduated and joined the staff of Chundikuli Girls' College in the year 1959, when I was about to sit for my G. C. E Advanced Level Examination. I had the good fortune of learning under her for a short while. My close association and admiration for Mrs. Vijiadharmha grew more, when I joined the staff of Chundikuli Girls' College in the year



1982. Soon afterwards Mrs. Vijiadharma was appointed supervisor for Lower school and I became the vice-principal. I can still picture Mrs. Vijiadharma seated in the supervisor's room and quietly and diligently working. The staff and students felt free to go to her with any problem. She would calmly listen to them, and give them her sound advice. Many a time I myself had gone to her to discuss on school matters.

Teaching was her vocation. As an excellent teacher of Geography, she took all the care to see that even the weaker students fared well. When you entrust any job to Mrs. Vijiadharma you can rest assured that it will be done, and done perfectly. That is how responsible and duty conscious she was. Mrs. Vijiadharma's loyalty to her Alma mater is exceptional. Her connections with Chundikuli Girls College started when she joined the school in the year 1944 in Grade 3. Then, after a break of three years for studies in the University, she joined the staff and served the school for 37 long years. Roughly she has had 60 long years of connection with Chundikuli Girls' College. She had stood strong, And served the school during the difficult war torn years. We are thankful to her for the long and faithful service she has rendered to her Alma mater. Mrs. Vijiadharma's happy married life unfortunately lasted only for a few years. Here again without giving up in life, she excelled as a single mother in bringing up her precious daughter Theivika with devotion. She took all the trouble to educate her well, and instill all the great values and settle her down in marriage. Mrs. Vijiadharma's deep sense of duty is personified in how she took care of her sister Ranji and her aged mother.

When I returned to Sri Lanka recently from USA something strongly prompted me to contact Mrs. Vijiadharma. I somehow got her cell phone number through a friend, and I talked to her a couple of times. When I asked her whether I could visit her,



Mrs. Vijiadharma being a person who never liked to inconvenience other people, immediately replied "No Naveena, this place is not a convenient place for you to visit." I was taken aback by the answer, but knowing her I assumed that she didn't want to inconvenience me. So I gave my telephone number and told her to call me if ever she was in need of any help. This conversation with Mrs. Vijiadharma made me think of all the past teachers who have served Chundikuli Girls' College. I suggested to the O.G.A committee Colombo branch, that we invite all the senior past teachers who are resident in Colombo and honour them during the following committee meeting. This matter was discussed, agreed upon and the date for this event was fixed for the 9th of January, 2009. Unfortunately that was the day Mrs. Vijiadharma fell ill and was admitted to the hospital. We were all sorry that she could not make it, and we hardly guessed that it was the beginning of her final journey to reach eternity. As we stand in awe, salute and say "Thank you" to a life well lived, may the Lord Almighty bless her soul.

*Naveena Joe Devananthan*

*Retired Vice Principal Chundikuli Girl's College*

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### **TRIBUTE FROM MRS. K.P. MUTHIAH**

Chandra and I were neighbours and we used to daily walk together to teach at Chundikuli Girl's College. Chandra was a strong member of the teaching staff. As neighbours, we frequently visited each other's houses and enjoyed good times together. I knew her parents and sisters very well. I am very sad that I was not able to meet Chandra after I moved to Canada. However she was always in my thoughts and prayers. She was a stellar teacher and showed great love to all her students. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

*Mrs. K.P. Muthiah*

*Retired Teacher of Chundikuli Girl's College*

## **TRIBUTE TO MRS. VIJIADHARMA**

I am greatly privileged to pay a tribute to Mrs. Vijiadharmā or "Chandra Anta" as she was known to Theivika's friends. As a teacher, she had a great impact on the hundreds of students who were fortunate enough to pass through her hands at Chundikuli Girls' College. She was a composed and dedicated teacher, who was highly respected and admired by all who knew her. A few kind, but firm words from her accomplished much more than any amount of reprimands. She was instrumental in laying a good foundation for a good character in every child, during her years as primary school supervisor.

Her home was always open for Theivika's friends, and we were always made to feel welcome and had such great times there. She was a great social worker as well, and found time to help the needy amongst her very busy schedule. She greatly loved giving of her time, her energy and resources and none who came in contact with her went away empty. Though she is no longer with us, the fragrance of her life will always remain with us, and she will always be remembered with love and gratitude.

*Dhamayanthi  
Former Student Chundikuli Girl's College*

## **TRIBUTE FROM THE GRANDCHILDREN**

Dearest Ammamah,

We love you Ammamah and will miss you. We greatly enjoyed getting your parcels of goodies from Colombo and your memories will keep Ammah and us happy.

*With all Our Love,  
Krishan, Laxmi & Raathai*

## MY SISTER CHANDRA

So you have stepped beyond first Chandra, though I am twenty months older. You wanted to meet all your three grandchildren and always were so careful with your health and I am so sad you did not go early enough to hospital this time, when it was most essential.

You and I grew up together like twins Chandra, as Ammah always dressed us alike and oiled and combed our hair in two plaits. I remember playing with you with our building blocks, top, doll and yellow chinaware tea set in the 'thinnai' in ammammah's house. We learnt and used to practice the violin and passed exams together. We were good friends and never had major disagreements with each other. I remember you falling ill with typhoid after we moved to No.86 and you lost your hair which was similar to mine, and got a thick head of stiff long hair after that.

You refused a proposal soon after my registration crying that you wanted to continue your studies and Appah rejected that match. You were the perfect aunt for my five children and they all remember you with great gratitude. You looked after them well when we were away on leave for four months in 1964.

You were very happy with Vije and Theivika and it is a such a pity that he died so young. Theivika was your life and you were very proud of all her academic and cultural achievements at College and The Kelaniya University.

Theivika's grand wedding to Harinesan Devarajah was the high point in your life and it was a joyous occasion when all of us met together. You would have missed Theivika a lot and must have been happy to be with her family twice in Melbourne and you were looking forward so much to join them again. We never get all what we want in life, do we? Though you have gone without meeting Laxmi and Raathai, I am sure that your Spirit will always be there blessing and guiding your three grandchildren in the future.

*Your Sister Lalitha*



### **TRIBUTE FROM NIRANJAN**

I am saddened by your unexpected demise, but I also understand that had you survived, you may not have enjoyed a tolerable quality of life.

We got to know each other very well when I lived at 86 Kandy road for three years whilst attending St. John's college. From that time I have always had a deep affection and respect for you, which was reciprocated by you to me. You led an exemplary life and I was extremely proud of you. You will always remain in my thoughts and prayers. May God bless your soul to rest in peace.

*Your loving nephew Niranjan*

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### **TRIBUTE FROM NISHA**

Chandra Anta was a big part of my childhood. She was a calm and very organized person. I don't think school would have been the same for me without Theivika and Chandra Anta. I rarely submitted homework and would forget things that I had to bring to school. It was a good thing that I had Theivika in my class and Chandra Anta on the school staff. I don't know how many times I would have borrowed money from Chandra Anta in school because I forgot to bring money to pay for something or other.

Chandra Anta's life revolved around Theivika. As part of Theivika's "clique" I think I spent more time at Theivika's house than I did in my own house. I am sure Chandra Anta heard all the nonsense that we teenagers talked about, and knew all the mischief we were up to, but she never interfered. I have a lot of very happy memories from that time and I am glad that she was wise enough to let teenagers be teenagers.



I feel very sad that I didn't really keep in touch with Chandra Anta after I left Sri-Lanka. She on the other hand would send postcards and small gifts when ever she got the chance. I hope she knew that I did care for her and now remember her with great fondness.

*Nisha Shanmugarajah*

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**TRIBUTE FROM ABI**

You have gone so fast that it is hard for me to accept it yet. When Grandma told me this morning that she would be flying to Sri Lanka in the afternoon to see you I thought she was over-reacting as I did not realize how bad your health was. I cannot believe the news we have just received! How quickly God has called you into his arms! You have led an exemplary life as a Mother, Grandmother and Teacher. Your presence will be dearly missed. My only conciliation is that you did not suffer long and that you are now at peace.

I am so grateful that my two siblings and I were able to spend a few precious moments with you during our trip to Sri Lanka in 2007. I have always heard the stories of the love and care you showed to my Father and his three Brothers while they were growing up in Jaffna. However it was only during our trip did I get to experience this same love first hand.

When we first met you in Sri Lanka you were walking with a cane, and during our stay you joined us on our trips to the shopping malls, restaurants and visits to our relatives. You treated us to lunch, bought us ramboutan fruit, and gave us all small tokens to remember you by. By the end of our trip you were walking without your cane and I truly believe that your strength was renewed by having us there to shower your love on.

The joyful memories I have from that trip will stay with me forever. I pray that your soul reaches the abode of peace and pledge that those of us left behind will keep you in our hearts so you will not be forgotten.

*With love Abinath*

### **FAMILY HISTORY OF A. VIJADHARMA**

In Ponnalai, Jaffna Appukuty Aiyathurai married Nagamuthu and they had six children, but one son died when he was a child.

**Thatchinamoorthy**

**Ratnapoopathy**

**Vijiadharma**

**Sadadcharam**

**Paramesway**

**Thatchinamoorthy** married Ranjithamalar they had three daughters and a son: Mala, Dhaya, one is called Nangi (this is her pet name)

**Ratnapoopathy** married Rajaratnam they had two sons and a daughter: Indran, Rajan, Rajeswary (Indran's full name is Gunendran)

**Vijiadharma** married Chandravathana they had one daughter: Theivika

**Theivika Vathsala** married Harinesan Devarajah and they have Krishan, Laxmi, & Raathai.

**Sadadcharam** married Noeline they have one daughter: Janaki

**Parmeswary** married Navaratnam they have a daughter and a son: Bavani and Bahirathan.

I first met Brother Viji when Sada and I were courting each other way back during the year of 1968. Sada and Viji were very close to each other and kept in touch with each other.

They both lived in boarding houses and so got together whenever time permitted. Viji was a very kind, thoughtful, helpful and generous person. At the time I met him many proposals were being brought to find a suitable bride, which he turned down each time. Sada and I were patiently waiting for him to get settled for our marriage to take place therefore. Viji then told Sada that the wait for him to find a bride is going to be a long wait, and that would not be fair, and so Sada and I should get married first. The family agreed and our marriage went through in 1970.

In 1973 I was expecting my daughter Janaki, when suddenly out of the blues and finally to everyone's relief, Viji met his soul mate, the lovely Chandra. They were made for each other and we were delighted and everyone was so happy that he finally said "yes". I was eight months in my pregnancy when Viji and Chandra tied the knot. They thereafter went to London for two years and when they returned Viji moved to Jaffna. Theivika completed their happiness. We used to visit them at their residence in Kandy Road whenever time permitted. The brothers would talk for hours catching up on news and all the gossip that each other had missed out. They were happy times that I cherish in my heart. Then tragedy struck and Viji was taken away from us. We were devastated. The memory of Sada doing the last rites with uncontrollable tears streaming down his face is still vividly clear in my mind. It was a cruel blow from which Sada never recovered.

But life moves on and so did Chandra Akka and Theivika. With the coming of the IPKF and events that followed thereafter Chandra Akka and Theivika moved to Colombo. We were able to visit them when time permit and kept in touch with each other. Then came the happy occasion of Theivika's marriage to Harry and Sada and I were honoured to give the bride away. Theivika



moved to Australia. Then tragedy struck once more and Sada was taken away from us. Life has its ways of surprising us and at the same time giving us the courage to go through life by the grace of God. And now Chandra Akka is gone and we move on with the memories that she has left. I will never forget her love, her patience and gentle ways. How she never failed to send a card for a birthday or anniversary. How she never failed to visit me at Christmas and the chats we had going down memory lane. They will live forever. God has taken his loved one back to him and they are reunited at last.

*Loving Sister in law Noeline Sadachcharam*

### **CHANDRAVATHANA VIJIADHARMA**

Chandravathana Vijiadharmam ( nee Nadarajah ) called by everyone as Chandra, was born on 3.3.1936, as the second child of V.A.Nadarajah and Nallammah (Saras) in Ariyalai, Jaffna, Sri Lanka. They had their firstborn Lalitha Indranee in 1934, Chandra was born twenty months later, followed by Ranjithamalar on 23.9.1941 and Leelavilasini on 7.12.1946. The family lived with Nallammah's widowed mother Sinnammah in her cosy three piece, thatched, mud house on Aanathan Vadali Road with her six children.

Chandra's parents, both eldest first cousins in adjoining houses fell in love and married in 1933. They were an exceptionally devoted couple made for each other and I never saw them having disagreements or cross words. Nadarajah, intelligent and good natured, gave up his university education to start his career as a Junior clerk in the Government Audit Department, Colombo. He was not given any dowry, but he had an open hand and an open mind and dutifully shouldered the heavy burden of my mother's six siblings and young widowed mother SinnammahNagalingam.



Newly wed Nadarajah and Saras lived with Uncle Mailoo and family in Colombo for a while, when their eldest Lalitha was a baby, after which Saras returned to live with her mother in Ariyalai. Absence does make the heart grow fonder. With only the fleeting weekend visits to be together Nada and Saras kept their love throbbing alive by daily correspondence. They wrote letters to each other every single day and we would see ammah either writing or waiting with her letter in hand at the gate when we returned from school.

I remember our carefree childhood with Chandra and me as the first two grandchildren at granny's house in the 1940's, surrounded by the extended family of doting uncles and aunts. We lived well, not missing any of the modern amenities of electricity, pipe-borne water, fridge, fans, radio TV etc. People drew water from their own wells 10 to 20 feet deep with the now extinct palmyrah palm well-sweep, (One or two men walked up and down the well sweep to make it easier to draw up the heavy palmyrah leaf 'pattai' or bucket of water. People had their own paddy fields, cows, goats and poultry too. Everybody walked. There were few bicycles but not a single girl rode them those days. The slow bullock carts, Austin hiring cars, and the infrequent buses, were soon outnumbered by truck loads of foreign soldiers, mostly African, driving on our roads during the 1941 Second World War. The war ushered in the occasional Aeroplane to our empty sky.

Chandra and I vividly remember the day the Japanese bombed Colombo, only because Ammah and all the other wives were in tears frightened for the lives of their husbands in Colombo. The war brought blackouts, rations of food, fuel plus the introduction of wheat flour into our staple rice only diet. We were wary of the war, but did not suffer any calamities, though a few families cut L shaped bunkers in their gardens. Our neighbor Paramer



Appah, father of Puwanes Sittampalam, made a bunker where we children played hide and seek along with our kilithattu and mango seed hopscotdh. The rope swing with the coconut frond 'thennai mattai' seat (Already, the Anna Oonjal with two children standing on either side of the plank facing each other, the rest seated on the plank in the middle, supported by two loops of rope tied to the branch, was no more during our time itself ) from the mango tree for every child, the cartload heaps of white sand from Kilakkariyalai in every courtyard. The lovely scent of fresh cut mounds of golden hay, drawn home in carts by trotting bullocks with tinkling bells from the paddy fields, for us to tumble in and play, before being heaped for the year as fodder for cattle.

The New Year celebrations and Sports meet in Pillaiyar Kovil grounds followed by the Cultural Stage Presentation at nights on the Parwathy Vidyasalai stage. The smell of the first rainfall after nine months of drought, on the thirsty ground. The fast running North East monsoon flood waters we gaped at in December. The fun we had with playmates cooking rice, curries, and tasty manioc flour pittu with twig firewood on real fire, in small earthen pots and pans in the tiny hut appah made for us under the large neem tree. How, stick in hand we watched the hen proudly strutting her chicks around, when sometimes suddenly a hovering kite would surprise us, swoop down from the sky and fly away with the squeaking chick! Every household, daily produced all the fresh eggs, milk and curd which we children relished. Our pet dog Top, and goat kid always trailing us. The daily visit of our fishmonger friend Valli, the bicycle bell of the Sinhalese baker, the regular visits of the sesame gingelly oil vendor, the Singer sewing machine master, the metal craftsmen who mend worn out brass pots and pans with an inside coating of tin. The annual goat sacrifice at the Muthumariamman Temple and the now almost extinct Folk dance Nartu koothu.



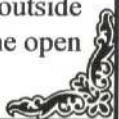
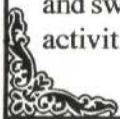
Kuttimama Thurairajah's daily ritual at dusk, lighting the kerosene hurricane and the hand lamps, while the lamplighter lit the tall oil lamp posts on the roads. How ammah hurried us to dress up in traditional long skirts, blouses, chimikkis and ottiyans and leave as soon as we heard the special beat of the temple drum, announcing that Sandeswarar was on his inspection rounds before the poojah during our Pillaiyar Temple Festival. Our walks to the Nallur Kandasamy Temple festival to be jostled by the massive crowds while waiting outside the temple to worship the adorned deities, borne aloft on the bare shoulders of male devotees. The thronging crowds, the carnival atmosphere, the shopping spree everyone indulged in during festival time, and our walk back home crunching groundnuts. How all of us sat in a circle after dinner every other day to split the fronds of fresh cut palmyrah ola leaves from the tall palms, so relished by our goats and cows, as our parched land offered them no grass. Our geographically impoverished Jaffna peninsula, has no rivers or streams and enjoys rain only during the North East monsoon in November, December and January. However, we have been blessed with an ever expanding global wealth of our persevering human resources. We listened to lilting hit melodies of popular Thiagaraja Bhagavathar on the gramophone. Black and white films I recollect like Prahalada and Harichandra with P.U.Chinnappa and Kannamba in lead roles and the occasional silent movies at Parvathy Vidyasalai were indeed rare treats.

Appah was Ammah's love and he was the king of her life. Their life centered on each other and theirs was a continuous love story. Ammah was the boss as appah always listened to her. I remember appah telling me once, "she studied so little but look at her now". Ammah improved her knowledge of English through her daily letter writing habit. She kept this up almost till the very last, writing lovely letters to all of us. Appah did all the family shopping and brought lots of things for us and ammah



from Colombo along with boxes of books and magazines for his library. Chandra and I used to race down our lane to the railway track when we heard the morning mail train puff and coo. I can still visualize appah's broad smile and wave and yet taste the orange candy he threw for us in a parcel. I also recollect how once a spark from the steam engine ignited the thatched roof of a neighbour's shouse, which burnt down within minutes as we watched with awe. Ammah was quite stylish then, and was the only one in our vicinity to use ponds face cream and perfume. I remember ammah walking with appah to the temple festival, in all her dressed up elegance, slim and graceful in her silk saree. Though ammah was mild mannered, I also remember her anger when I brought home an abandoned pup from Columbuthurai Road on my way home from Chettiatheru school and her annoyance when I always curled up in my favorite rattan chair and read away non-stop, never helping her in housework like Chandra. Chandra was Ammah's pet, always helped her and did all what ammah asked her to do.

We annually went to the Mattuvil Temple early morning by bullock cart with Ammamamah's chatty of 'kali' and mangoes for breakfast. That was our picnic, and after our bath we helped to make the fried mothahams, pongal and white brinjal curry. Appah also bought ammah a Singer sewing hand machine which was the only one in the neighbourhood. Ammah loved to sew and made clothes for other families too, especially during New Year making ammamamah grumble that she did not help much with the cooking and housework. I remember Chandra or me pulling the garment as she sewed to prevent puckering and appah enjoyed chatting and pulling it when he was around. Mahes and Sothy Ammahs related stories to us, shared most of the cooking and sweeping while granny cared for the cows, goats and outside activities. I do not remember ammah ever cooking on the open





hearth in the earthen chatty-pots those days, but of course made up for it later, cooking non-stop when we moved to our own house. When appah came on leave, Ammah made egg coffee and specal coconut milk pittu which he relished. He would walk to Columbuthurai to buy the fish and in the evenings we walked and visited all our relations. After Std 3 in Parvathy Vithiasalai, Chandra and I walked to Chettiatheru Tamil school for two years till Grade 5. Then I joined Chundikuli in 1943 and Chandra joined in 1944. I remember racing in Suppan's rickshaw with neighbour Thavam first and then Chandra, to Chundikuli and started to learn English in Grade 3 Special.

I remember ammah falling very ill with malaria when she was expecting Ranji. Our Ayurvedic Family physician Dr.Rasanayagam visited us often to treat her. Chandra and I used to play with the then rare pieces of ice bought buried in sawdust, which was used in an ice bag on the forehead to bring the fever down. Though the Jaffna hospital was functioning, very few patronized it those days as it was shunned as the free charity hospital. Earlier uncle Gunaratam's fractured leg was treated by some native physician who mismanaged it. Periamama acquired a permanent limp which may have been avoided with proper treatment. Mahes ammah married Navyman Sithappah N.Nadarajah who moved into our household and later Sothy ammah married uncle Sivaguru and moved out to his house.

Appah worked very hard and rose to be a Superintendent of Audits, roving all over the isle. Appah during the time of Ranji's birth, built the palatial upstairs house on 86 Kandy Road near the Kachcheri railway crossing in 1941. I can picture ammammah once racing with baby Ranji held arms face down in her arms, to rush to the doctor when she had fits, as panadol and aspirin were then unknown. Uncle Amerasingham who were verty to school, helped a lot supervising the construction of the new house, which

was rented to the District Judge. When we shifted there in 1946, ammah was so very proud and reigned supreme as the queen of the lovely house. She spent the whole morning sweeping and cleaning the compound and house first and was always late with lunch curries bubbling on the fire, when we came rushing in the afternoon. Ammah blossomed out to be an excellent cook and became famous for her hoppers, thosai, yellow rice, delicious banana fritters murukku and palakarams. Appah bought her a fridge which was a luxury then and her hobby was to collect cooking utensils and palmyrah ola baskets of different sizes. Appah took us out for regular holidays and I yet remember our trips to Kekirawa, Sigiriya, Nedunthevu and Naianthevu. Appah and Ammah hosted the happy occasion of the weddings of his brother Canagasingam and her brothers Gunaratnam, Amerasingham, Rajaratnam and Thurairajah at No 86 Kandy Rd. I left my home after early marriage and my four sons enjoyed the love and care of Aammah and sisters when they studied at St. Johns Jaffna from 1969 when ammah cooked them their favourite meals.

Chandra started her education at Parwathy Vithyasalai near the Sithyvinayagar Temple up to Grade 3 where uncle Gunaratnam was a teacher. Later there was some displeasure when uncle lost his job, we were pulled out and walked a long distance on AV Road to Chettiatheru Tamil School Columbuthurai for 2 years. Chandra joined Chundikuli from 1944 in Grade 3 Special, when we were living in Ananthan Vadali Road. First we went in a rickshaw drawn by barefooted fair Suppan with a kondai for a short time, then joined the school bus on Kandy Road. Later we walked barefoot to school too, except when some wore wooden clogs in the rainy season and we had to wear tennis shoes for special occasions. We shifted to 86 Kandy Road in 1946 and Chandra and I walked up and down four times daily, past the Jaffna Secretariate in the

blazing sun. I later heard that young Secretariate officers used to eagerly wait and watch us school girls. Appah was interested in Carnatic music and Chandra and I learnt the violin first under cousin Kamalāsani Muthiah and finished under Mrs. Ananthanayagam at Chundikuli, passing the 5<sup>th</sup> grade exam. Chandra was a girl guide and was rather quiet and softspoken, unlike me who was very talkative and noisy. She was Ammah's pet and would scrape the coconut and help ammah with kitchen chores while I just curled up and read away without helping ammah. Ammah made different varieties of food every day, but unfortunately Chandra was busy with her job, never got the opportunity to cook and did not learn any of ammah's cooking skills.

After A Levels, Chandra entered Peradeniya university in 1955, graduated in the arts with Philosophy, Tamil, and Geography as main and immediately joined Chundikuli as teacher in 1959. That was her vocation and she was a dedicated teacher. Her smart appearance and calm and cool demeanor won her respect from all who interacted with her. Chandra joined a number of Chundikuli teachers on a trip to Kashmir which she really enjoyed and often spoke about with joy. She later completed her Diploma in Education and faithfully served her Almamater Chundikuli for 37 years and was the Lower School Supervisor for ten years till her retirement in 1996. Chandra was an excellent Geography teacher and several graduates will remember her skill and expertise with gratitude. Chandra's only child Theivika shone as an outstanding student in Chundikuli, participating in lots of extracurricular cultural activities, and was chosen as the Headgirl in 1990. Artistic Ranji, excelled in Home Science her chosen field. She was as excellent seamstress, super cook and created exquisite pieces of machine embroidery. Leela was an excellent student, graduated from the Peradeniya Campus and joined Chundikuli as a teacher too. Appah, a self taught



astrologer, had too much faith in astrology and as a result delayed the marriage of my sisters, much to ammah's annoyance. Appah retired in 1967 planning to enjoy a leisurely life with ammah and his lovely collection of books, but fate decreed it otherwise. Appah died quite suddenly on the operating table in 1971 during the Che Guvera troubles. Ammah was stunned, reeled under this unexpected blow and changed completely from that day. She refused to get out of the house for anything and foolishly we too agreed allowing her to do what she wanted. She was content to just stay at home and cook for Chandra and Leela, both teachers at Chundikuli. Niranjan went to London in 1972 to continue his studies and I started running house for the boys at 147 Kandy Road. There was a steady stream of boarders in the front office room at 86 and some enjoyed ammah's tasty cooking too.

Chandra married Vijiadharma in 1973 and what a handsome pair they made. Tall, stately, gentle and mildmannered, Vije was a devoted husband and Chandra was very happy with him. The couple went to UK where Chandra was a teacher and Vije studied Accountancy. First they lived with cousin Balasubramaniam and Rajes and later lived in a flat too for two years. When Chandra conceived, she was scared to have the baby in London and despite my pleading that we would send ammah there, she returned to Jaffna in time to have her only child Theivika under ammah's care. Ammah was rejuvenated with the arrival of Theivika on whom she showered all her care, love and affection. Theivika was the darling of Vije, Chandra and all the uncles and aunts and was an extra chubby baby. Vije went to work in Oman when Theivika was a toddler and Theivika and Chandra missed spending time with him except for his fleeting holidays. He returned after sometime, bought a car, and started The Pitco Tea Company in Jaffna.

Leela married Dr.Yogadeva in 1974, settled down in London and is blessed with Arani and Ahilan. My daughter Nirmala

married Dr.Ganesaratnam in 1974 and had Nisha in London starting ammah's link to the fourth generation. Nirmala had Ramana, Pavithra, and Ranga in Sri Lanka and Ammah and Ammammah helped me to look after her during her confinements. Ammah would send us a steady flow of food from No.86 - hoppers, thosai, Iddli, palakarams and I feel sorry now that I never learnt from her to make palakarams.

Ravi went to London 1975, Ajantha joined him in 1976, and Aravindha went to USA in 1985. When Chandra was in London Ammah stayed with us and No 86 was rented out to Jehovah's Witnesses for sometime, till Chandra returned from London.

Tragedy struck again and again in the family when Ranji lost her beloved Selva in 1976 after a scant six years of married life. Ranji returned to live with ammah, surrendered herself to spirituality, has found solace and is now an ardent follower of her chosen Guru Maharaji. We lost Chandra's beloved Vije too in 1983 quite suddenly with heart failure and it was a cruel blow to Chandra and Theivika. Granny Sinnammah aged 90 also passed away in 1983. Sothy ammah who was so healthy and active when young became ill and died in 1986, before Sivam and Kannan could come from London to see her. Kuttimama Uncle Thurairajah, lived with Ammah in No.86, till he died in 1993. Ammah gradually got weaker, but still managed to carry on all her duties. The IPKF era in Jaffna resulted in Ammah, Chandra, Theivika and Ranji losing a lot of their cherished possessions including some jewelley and their collection of clothes. Ammah was quite alright when we left Jaffna to migrate to Canada in 1992. Ravi took Nalayini and Abi to visit them all in 1984 and presented a wheel chair and walker to Ammah which came in very handy and helped her a lot. (Chandra donated this wheel chair to the Kaithady Elders Home in 2005 when I was with her in Jaffna).

In 1989 Chandra and I were in the first batch of 21 trainees to complete a Diploma Course in Psychological Counseling conducted in Jaffna by Rev.Father Karaviyoor Selvaratnam, Rev. Father Damian & Psychiatrist Dr.Daya Somasunderam. Chandra enjoyed volunteering with the others at the Jaffna hospital Psychiatric unit and Shanthiyaham, the first Counseling Centre established in the North.

Ajantha visited Jaffna a couple of times and Niranjana braved the hostile conditions to war ravaged Jaffna and saw them in 1995. The longdrawn internal war adversely affected and changed the course of life of every single individual in Sri Lanka. Ammah, Chandra, Theivika and Ranji too had to undergo the terrible trauma of fleeing Jaffna at short notice and joined everyone else to become refugees in Point Pedro in the 1995 exodus. It must have been really heartbreaking for all of them to leave a home full of memories and possessions. Ammah was still ok when she and Ranji came by ICRC ambulance while Chandra and Theivika by ICRC ship to Colombo. We are most grateful that uncle Dr.Sittampalam and Puwanes gave their upstairs flat to them to live free of rent for 7 years. Ammah and Chandra were very happy to witness the grand wedding of their pet Theivika to Harinesan Devarajah on 27.0.1999 seated in a wheelchair. It was a joyful family reunion as ammah had all four daughters together after a long time. Periamama Gunaratnam, Yogam mami came from Trincomalee, Niranjana, Leela from London, Lalitha, Aravindha from Canada and Praba, Prema, Sothy and Abi from Jaffna braved the hazardous trip to grace the happy occasion.

Theivika's departure to Melbourne with Harry, must have created a big void in Ammah's and Chandra's lives. Ammah who was walking with the walker suffered a fall in 2000, broke her hip and had to be hospitalized. Chandra tended her with a lot of love and care. The fracture mended well but gradually ammah got more and more immobile and became



bedridden. She gave up eating even the egg she was taking and became a total vegetarian during her last days.. Ammah was lucky she had caring Rani to help, bathe and look after her and she became very fond of her. Ajantha spent time with her very often and last visited her in September 2001. After attending Dr.Sittampalam's funeral in 2001 in London, I am glad I spent 5 weeks with ammah and helped Chandra a little to care for her. Her body had become frail and feeble, but her mind was alert. It was good that Leela and Yogadeva too were there with her in Nov.2001. Theivika and Harry visited her at the end of 2001 from Melbourne. Aravindha, Suba, Priyanka and Pritika were in Colombo on holiday till end Januay 2002. Aravindha and Nirmala helped them to shift from their flat In Veluvanapura to a flat in Hampden lane. Ammah and Chandra must have longed to get back to 86 but in the prevailing conditions and her weak state of health, that was impossible. Ammah was freed of her mortal coils and passed away peacefully on 11.2.2002(Thai Amavasia Thithi) Our cousin Santharajah had the honour of performing her last rites. After a separation of over 30 years, ammah must have at last joyfully joined appah. May Ammah rest in peace.

Chandra and Ranji moved from Hampden Lane to a flat in Hill street in Dehiwala for 2 years. Chandra went to Melbourne on a holiday visa on December 5, 2002 when Krishan was born to Theivika, spent a joyous three months with her beloved Theivika's family and returned to Colombo. She went to Jaffna and lived at the back portion of 86 Kandy Road which had been converted as a Day Care Centre for more than a year. She stayed in the hotel near Savoy theatre for a month or two and again went to Melbourne in 2006 and returned after four months. When she returned from Melbourne she stayed with Nirmala for a short time and then moved in with Ranji. Chandra and Ranji stayed

at Ebenezer place near the Maharaji Centre for a year and a half so that they could walk to programs.

From about 2002 Chandra turned spiritual, started to be a Maharaji devotee and received Knowledge in 2004. From their Hill street residence Chandra always joined Ranji to The Maharaji Centre at Ebenezer place. In November 2004, Chandra and Ranji went to Delhi with a lot other devotees from all over Sri Lanka, for The Hans Jayanthi ( Father of Maharaji's 3 day Birthday Program ). They first went to Madras and then went by train for two days and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. This was the first time Chandra saw Maharaji in person. Both of them preferred it, lived walking distance from the Centre and went for every program on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Chandra loved her three grand children very much, spent her last few years yearning to see them, and told Theivika that she would not die without seeing the girls. Krishan was born on 5.12.2002, Laxmi on 8.11.2006 and Raathai was born on 19.10.2007 and she spent her time doting on them, sending them presents by post from Sri Lanka and doing poojahs for their welfare in Temples. She enjoyed talking and hearing them sing on the telephone and waited for their calls.

Ranji fell ill in 2007, Lalitha and Leela came and Chandra rented a house at 71 Kowdana Road Dehiwala where Leela helped them to settle down. They lived there for about 3 months, but Chandra decided to go to an Elder's home run by Dr.Shankar at Kirullapponne Polhengoda. Circumstances made Chandra to be not very happy with Lalitha and when Lalitha left after 3 months, Ranji was living in Kowdana road alone as a big advance

had been given. Ranji fell ill again, had to be hospitalized and joined Chandra in Shanker's Elder's home to share a room there. The approach to this home is very bad and they had very few visitors. Ranji managed to come for Maharaji programs by bus but Chandra came by auto for only the Poya programs and became homebound. Chandra was not very happy but stayed there as two big advances had been paid and she wanted to be careful with money.

I am certain that the dates of Birth and Death of every individual are definitely pre-destined, and when the time arrives for the event to occur, the pieces fall correctly like a jigsaw puzzle. Thus, unknown to anyone, the stage was unknowingly set little by little for Chandra's final departure. She fell ill with stomach pain and unlike other times delayed going to the hospital. Theivika arrived in good time, did her best and everything that could be done for her was done, but she passed away on January 19<sup>th</sup> 2009 (Thithi Thai Theipirai Navami ) just a short time before Leela and I arrived here. I am grateful that she did not linger and suffer long. Chandra must be with her beloved Vije, Appah and Ammah now at last. May her soul rest in peace.





*Sister Laliha*



*Wedding of Selvarajah & Ranjithamalar*



*No. 86, Kandy Road, Jaffna, Srilanka.*



## **Thank you**

We, the family of the late Chandra Vijiadharma wish to express our sincere gratitude to all those who shared in our grief and supported us in many ways during this difficult time.

